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Chairman:	Mr. Politi	(Italy)
later:	Mr. Vázquez (Vice-Chairman)	(Ecuador)
later:	Mr. Politi (Chairman)	(Italy)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 164: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/55/37, A/55/179 and Add.1; A/C.6/55/L.2)

1. **Mr. Medrek** (Morocco) said that acts of terrorism constituted a violation of all moral and legal standards. Their objective was to destabilize international peace and security, and they hindered economic and social development. His delegation reaffirmed its categorical and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism as depraved and unjustifiable, whatever its form or motivation. In order to combat terrorism, States must cooperate fully at the bilateral and regional levels through continuous exchange of information and knowledge. The international community must make a concerted effort to encourage all States that had not yet done so to become parties without delay to the various international legal instruments relating to international terrorism and to harmonize their domestic legislation with those instruments.

2. Without disparaging the value of the principles set out in the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism (annex to General Assembly resolution 49/60), his delegation felt that it should be possible to develop a comprehensive convention on international terrorism which would act as a framework for dealing with activities not covered by existing instruments. The draft proposed by India provided a good basis for further consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/110, taking into account the comments of the Working Group of the Sixth Committee, with a view to agreeing on a text which would enjoy unanimous support in 2001.

3. His delegation commended the work done by the representative of Australia during the consultations on outstanding issues and the efforts made to arrive at a solution that would result in adoption of the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism (A/C.6/53/L.4, annex I).

4. His delegation also reiterated its support, if the international community so desired, for the convening of a high-level conference to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

5. His Government had adopted concrete measures to combat terrorism. No specific law on the suppression of terrorism had been enacted, because terrorism was already defined as an offence in the criminal code. Morocco had ratified the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (Tokyo, 14 September 1963), the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (The Hague, 16 December 1970), the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Montreal, 23 September 1971), and the Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (Montreal, 1 March 1991). It had signed the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (Vienna, 3 March 1980), the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Montreal, 24 February 1998), the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (Rome, 10 March 1988) and the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (Rome, 10 March 1988). In addition, it was about to complete domestic procedures for the ratification of some of those instruments. Since action on the part of individual States was as effective as regional and international cooperation, his Government had established close and fruitful ties of cooperation at the bilateral and regional levels for the purpose of combating terrorism.

6. **Mr. Kittikhoun** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that terrorist activities affected the stability of nations and the very foundations of society and impeded full enjoyment of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. There was no justification for violence against innocent civilians, whatever the factors giving rise to such acts. In the light of the increasingly sophisticated and extensive network of organized terrorism, it was more urgent than ever that the international community should adopt concerted measures to combat terrorism and establish an effective global legal framework to that end. In that context, the ASEAN countries welcomed the adoption of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism (annex to General Assembly resolution 49/60), the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings

and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

7. ASEAN applauded the continued progress made by the Ad Hoc Committee in reinforcing the legal regime for countering international terrorism and, in that connection, commended the delegation of India for proposing a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism (A/C.6/55/1). Such a draft convention should clearly establish an effective mechanism whereby a State party could exercise jurisdiction over terrorist offences and ensure that offenders were brought to justice. Furthermore, the draft should emphasize the importance of international cooperation based on the general basic principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The ASEAN countries would continue to work closely with other delegations to ensure the adoption of such a convention.

8. A high-level international conference could play an important role in the formulation of an organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The conference should focus, among other things, on preventive measures, including the promotion of cooperation among law-enforcement authorities. ASEAN supported the convening of such a conference and was ready to contribute to discussions on that topic.

9. **Ms. Randrianarivony** (Madagascar) said that, at the start of the new century, the United Nations had assumed a heavy responsibility for the defence of world peace, a necessary prerequisite for development. Serious and massive violations of human rights, massacres and conflicts of all kinds were seriously compromising international stability. Acts of terrorism and related drug trafficking continued to be a grave threat to international security and the most basic human rights. Her delegation therefore condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

10. Combating terrorism was a shared responsibility of the international community. Madagascar had signed three conventions, and ratified four others, relating to international terrorism. It had also entered into bilateral and regional agreements for the prevention and suppression of acts of terrorism. At the national level, although there were no specific laws dealing with international terrorism, acts which could be considered to fall under that category of crime were implicitly covered by various articles of the criminal code, which provided for penalties ranging from imprisonment to hard labour to death.

11. There was a need to complete work rapidly on a draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.

12. Her delegation welcomed the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism proposed by India and supported the negotiations in the Ad Hoc Committee aimed at completing the legal arsenal for combating and suppressing international terrorism in all its forms.

13. Her delegation also welcomed the adoption of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century (E/2000/30, chapter I, section A), which testified to the international community's concrete political commitment to combat crime at all levels and in all its forms.

14. Peace and stability were essential factors for progress towards prosperity, yet terrorism was a destabilizing factor affecting not only certain countries and regions but the entire world.

15. *Mr. Vázquez (Ecuador), Vice-Chairman took the Chair.*

16. **Mr. Su** Wei (China) said that in the past four years the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 had achieved remarkable results in strengthening international legal measures against terrorism. It was to be hoped that the determination, patience, sincerity, understanding and spirit of cooperation demonstrated by Member States would be maintained in future efforts.

17. His delegation had always condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and firmly opposed the use of terrorist acts as a means for achieving political or any other objectives. The suppression of terrorism had been a fundamental policy of his Government. The cross-border aspect of terrorism was becoming increasingly evident, necessitating close international cooperation, in particular in the elaboration of international conventions, the strengthening of domestic legislation and the granting of judicial assistance and extradition. China was a party to most of the international conventions for combating terrorism. His Government was undertaking the necessary domestic legal procedures for accession to the International Convention for the Suppression of

Terrorist Bombings and was seriously considering signing or acceding to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. It had demonstrated its political will to suppress terrorist acts of all kinds through its joint efforts with other countries. China was currently cooperating with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan in combating terrorism within the framework of the "Shanghai Five" States, which in their Dushanbe Declaration adopted on 5 July 2000 had confirmed their resolve jointly to combat terrorism. That regional mechanism for international cooperation could play an active role in combating international terrorism.

18. At the same time, however, his Government had always held that international cooperation in combating terrorism should abide by the established norms of international law, including the principles of State sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and should be conducive to the maintenance of international and regional security and stability.

19. During 2000, the Ad Hoc Committee had begun to examine the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. His delegation reiterated its support for India's proposal and considered that the adoption of the convention would strengthen the existing counter-terrorism legal framework and complement rather than replace existing conventions. The draft also touched upon some very sensitive and complex political and legal issues, the solution of which depended on the political will of the parties and the imagination and creativity with which the different interests and concerns were accommodated. He expressed the hope that the Ad Hoc Committee could complete its work on the elaboration of the convention in 2001.

20. The draft convention on the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism had almost achieved consensus within the Ad Hoc Committee; his delegation appreciated the efforts made by all parties to tackle the outstanding issues, but was concerned over the failure to find a suitable solution.

21. His delegation supported the Egyptian initiative on the holding of a high-level international conference on terrorism, under the auspices of the United Nations. The conference should be organized with care, however, in order to ensure that it was fruitful and attained the anticipated goals.

22. **Mr. Fernando** (Sri Lanka) said that his country attached the highest priority to the work of the United Nations on measures to eliminate international terrorism, as shown by its active participation in the Ad Hoc Committee and its commitment to the effective implementation of two important instruments in the fight against global terrorism namely, the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The latter was of crucial importance because it sought to address the problem of direct and indirect fund-raising for the terrorist coffers through the adoption of a series of very specific measures. His delegation trusted that Member States would assign the highest priority to the issue.

23. For Sri Lanka, international cooperation to combat terrorism was not merely an academic issue, because in recent years it had been the object of an unparalleled campaign of terror by a terrorist group operating within and outside the country. The group acted with impunity in a number of foreign countries and behind the facade of organizations that were ostensibly devoted to political, religious, social, cultural and even humanitarian goals and which raised funds that were, in reality, channelled to buy arms, ammunition and explosives for the campaign of terror. Sri Lanka was one of the many countries faced with the problem; it was therefore necessary to examine closely the connections between the complex terrorist networks operating in different parts of the world. Furthermore, the widely recognized existence of links between terrorism and the trafficking of drugs, persons and arms required the concerted effort of the entire international community.

24. His delegation welcomed India's proposal elaborating a comprehensive convention on international terrorism and had collaborated constructively with the other delegations in the Working Group entrusted with the task. Although significant progress had been made, there were several issues that needed to be examined, in particular the relationship between the new convention and existing conventions, the concept of State responsibility for the suppression of terrorism, and the need to take appropriate steps to ensure that asylum-seekers had not taken part in any terrorist activities before they were granted asylum.

25. His delegation hoped that the representatives would work with a spirit of accommodation to

overcome the impasse in negotiations on the draft convention on the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, because the Ad Hoc Committee had done valuable work which should not be lost. He also expressed the hope that the delegations would address, in a practical manner, the convening of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

26. **Ms. Álvarez** (Cuba) said that international terrorism was a source of great concern to all States, although it was not often considered in great depth, in terms of either its causes or its most profound and alarming connections within society. Her delegation once again condemned all acts, methods and practices of international terrorism, including the terrorism that was encouraged, financed or tolerated by States themselves. The Cuban people knew very well what that kind of terrorism meant, because for more than 40 years it had been the victim of diverse terrorist activities encouraged from abroad, which had caused significant material and human losses and resulted in immeasurable suffering.

27. The ratification and implementation in good faith by States of international conventions against international terrorism continued to be an important way of confronting that scourge. The political will of States to adopt the pertinent cooperation measures was also an essential factor, however. Despite its limited nature, her delegation had supported the sectoral advances made by the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210. It considered, however, that an international convention establishing the relevant general legal framework should be elaborated, because it would no doubt strengthen the existing legal regime. Her delegation therefore supported the negotiation of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism as proposed by the delegation of India.

28. Her delegation fully associated itself with the initiative on the convening of a high-level conference on international terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations, which had been supported by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at its meeting in Durban. The conference could make a significant contribution to the development of international cooperation in elaborating a plan of action to address terrorism by practical measures, and could also be a positive element in creating a climate of confidence. The United Nations was the most appropriate setting to achieve that goal. The conference should be prepared through a broad process within the Ad Hoc Committee. A meeting of experts on the fight against terrorist activities at the national level could also make a valuable contribution to the process, and her delegation was ready to take part in such activities.

29. With respect to the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, her delegation endorsed the common position of the non-aligned countries, welcomed the efforts that Ms. Stein had been making to bring the positions of delegations closer together and hoped that she would be able to bring the negotiations to a successful conclusion. However, the success of those efforts would not depend on minor drafting changes to the article that would determine the scope of the convention. Instead, it was a substantive issue whose solution was dependent on the political will of the parties.

30. **Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan) said that his country had consistently condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It also condemned terrorist activities perpetrated by individuals, groups or States, irrespective of their motivation. While all acts of terrorism were unacceptable, State terrorism was the worst, due to its wider impact. Pakistan was party to nine international treaties elaborated in recent years by the United Nations in its efforts to eliminate international terrorism. That was reflective of Pakistan's firm resolve to participate in the fight against terrorism.

31. Since Pakistan believed that cooperation among Member States could help to eradicate that evil, it cooperated with other countries in that regard on the basis of bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements. It also had information-sharing arrangements on various aspects of terrorism with a number of countries, including Egypt, Jordan and the United States of America, which had led to better coordination among the security agencies concerned.

32. In the last two decades, the largest number of terrorist acts had been carried against his country, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of persons and extensive destruction of public and private property. The Secretary-General had been provided details of those foreign-sponsored cowardly acts of terrorism directed against innocent Pakistani citizens, which

originated in Pakistan's immediate neighbourhood. No efforts were being spared to counter that grave threat to Pakistani society. As a victim of international terrorism, Pakistan fully understood the concerns of the international community and was ready to extend its full cooperation with a view to the elimination of that menace.

33. There was an unfortunate tendency among certain countries to equate the freedom struggles in Palestine, Kashmir and elsewhere with terrorism. Clearly, their motivation was to divert the attention of the international community from their campaigns to subjugate peoples. As a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Pakistan had always supported the principle that struggles for national liberation and self-determination did not constitute terrorism under international law. The right to self-determination was enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the majority of peoples had exercised it to attain their nationhood. In fact, it was not people engaged in struggles for their legitimate aspirations who committed acts of state terrorism, but rather the occupation forces which acted with impunity.

34. His delegation was equally disturbed by a recent trend on the part of some States and certain sections of the media to identify terrorism with a particular religion. Even random acts of violence involving Muslims were dubbed as Islamic fundamentalist acts of terrorism, whereas that appellation was not applied to acts of terrorism perpetrated by individuals belonging to other faiths. Terrorism had no creed and it affected all societies in equal measure. Therefore everyone needed to join in the efforts to combat it. Islam was a religion of peace and universal brotherhood. His delegation therefore considered it regrettable that a motivated campaign was being conducted to cast Islam in a negative light. That had been evident in the Third Committee, where an attempt had been made to give religious colouring to the so-called "honour" crimes, that were otherwise described in the West as "crimes of passion". The negative characterization of any one religion could only undermine collective efforts to promote common objectives.

35. Pakistan attached importance to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism. The Committee had held a useful round of discussions on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and delegations had put forward constructive proposals and ideas to improve the text submitted by the Indian delegation. It was extremely important that the draft convention should look into the question of terrorism in a comprehensive manner, taking into account the concerns of all delegations. The draft should also include an acceptable definition of terrorism. In that regard, his delegation expected that at its 2001 meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee would hold substantive discussions on the proposal submitted by the Organization of the Islamic Conference relating to the issue of definition.

36. **Mr. Al-Kadhe** (Iraq) said that his country was doing its utmost to combat terrorism and provided full support to the international community in accordance with the norms of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. He confirmed his delegation's solidarity with all Islamic countries in the implementation of the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism of 1998 and also endorsed the position taken by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at its Durban Conference of 1998 to the effect that it was necessary to promote international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. His delegation rejected any measure that was contrary to the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

37. It was high time that the international community formulated a definition of terrorism. All Member States must contribute to the gradual elimination of its basic causes, including racism, colonialism and foreign occupation. Neither the existing legal instruments nor the draft comprehensive convention contained a definition of terrorism. That could facilitate abuses by countries that preferred to use force rather than legal means to promote their interests to the detriment of the interests of other peoples. Such States were using all possible means to prevent the definition of terrorism. Whatever the case might be, any definition of terrorism would have to take into account the need to distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples for their territorial integrity and liberation.

38. His delegation fully supported current efforts to elaborate and adopt an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. Although the current draft represented an improvement, it was regrettable that it only dealt with acts committed by individuals and not by States or their armed forces, which would leave the way open for State terrorism. In that context, he recalled that two permanent members of the Security Council had used depleted uranium

weapons in their aggression against Iraq in 1991, in spite of the fact that such weapons were part of a new generation of radioactive weapons prohibited by the international community and that their effects would pose a threat to the lives of thousands of Iraqis and to the environment for many years to come. In that regard, his delegation supported the position of the Non-Aligned Movement, which should be taken into account in order to achieve consensus on the draft convention.

39. There was no doubt that the international community required a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. A convention of that type could achieve its objective, however, only if it contained a clear definition of terrorism and made an unequivocal distinction between acts of terrorism and the struggle of peoples for freedom and self-determination. He supported the proposal put forward by Malaysia on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference since the draft submitted by India did not meet those requirements. A convention which omitted such considerations would have grave consequences: it would not apply to some acts of terrorism, while, on the other hand, it would apply to other acts which should not be considered acts of terrorism.

40. He wondered whether it would be logical and fair, for example, for such a convention not to apply to the crimes perpetrated by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories. In addition, Iraq had been and continued to be the victim of terrorist acts committed by two permanent members of the Security Council. Since the most recent large-scale military attack, launched against the country in October 1991, those States, without the Council's authorization, had imposed no-fly zones in the north and south of the country. Furthermore, their daily air attacks, another example of State terrorism, had caused hundreds of casualties among the civilian population and considerable property damage. The United States of America had promulgated a so-called Act on the liberation of Iraq, by virtue of which millions of dollars were being used to fund terrorist groups for the purpose of overthrowing the Iraqi Government by force. A report published in *The New York Times* a few days after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1269 (1999), which condemned all acts of terrorism, had referred to the military training being provided to Iraqi mercenary groups by the Central Intelligence Agency, which proved that the United States was aiding and abetting international terrorism: such practices were aimed at destroying the infrastructure of another State and sowing terror among its population. The terrorist acts perpetrated by States caused many more casualties than those committed by individuals. He stressed the responsibility of States which provided arms, resources and support to terrorists in order to achieve their own political objectives.

41. **Mr. Sorreta** (Philippines) said that the work undertaken by the Committee, which had resulted in the adoption of concrete measures to eliminate international terrorism, symbolized the collective determination of Member States to rid the world of that scourge and would make a meaningful contribution towards the convening of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Everything possible must be done to ensure the success of that important meeting, and he looked forward to the continuation of consultations on that issue. His delegation had also been following closely the consultations on the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and was confident that they would reach a successful conclusion.

42. With regard to the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and the text submitted by the delegation of India, which had been considered by the Working Group in September, he said that the current draft was sufficiently comprehensive to be universally acceptable. In future it would perhaps be possible to draft a convention which would go beyond the obligation to try or extradite and beyond the rules which merely prohibited the use of one's territory for terrorists, to include rules on State responsibility. Until such time, such issues would have to be dealt with at the political level or through unilateral actions or uses of force of dubious legal validity. He welcomed the progress made in the Working Group in identifying areas which required further discussion, which were of immense importance and needed to be addressed while keeping in mind the objective of a universally acceptable and comprehensive convention. The definition of offences was also a fundamental issue, and the revised text of article 2 provided an excellent basis for future discussion.

43. Another significant issue was the relationship of the comprehensive convention to existing instruments relating to terrorism. The proposal by some delegations to apply the provisions of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties was interesting and appealingly simple, but it should be recalled that those rules were residuary rules which applied only in the absence of appropriate treaty provisions. Although they might guide the Committee in its work, it would be preferable to decide first on a policy, as had been suggested by the United Kingdom in the Working Group. He stressed the importance of a truly comprehensive convention, which should not be relegated to the status of a mere optional protocol to existing conventions which simply extended the obligation to try or extradite to terrorist acts not covered by existing anti-terrorist conventions.

44. The convention should also give due consideration to the victims of terrorism and offer them the possibility of obtaining compensation. Terrorists should likewise be prevented from profiting from their acts by selling their stories to the media or to filmmakers or at the very least, any profits therefrom should go to the victims. Although such measures were primarily a prerogative of States, the convention should encourage States to take the appropriate measures, since success in the battle against terrorism depended greatly on individual State action. His country, for example, was a party to most of the terrorist conventions and was in the process of becoming a party to the remaining conventions; it had criminalized specific acts of terrorism and was preparing legislation to further strengthen its ability to combat such acts. He therefore looked forward to the publication by the Secretary-General of a compendium of national laws and regulations regarding the prevention and suppression of international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, to which his Government had already made its contribution.

45. Cooperation, the key to combating international terrorism, should not be restricted to the provisions of the pertinent conventions and agreements. States should collaborate to resolve real instances of terrorism and refrain from any action that impeded their solution by the Government directly concerned. Cooperation and understanding on the part of all States, in particular those whose interests or citizens might be involved in the situation, were essential in order to prosecute the perpetrators and prevent future attacks.

46. **Mr. Štefánek** (Slovakia) said that his delegation aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union. The issue of the elimination of terrorism continued to be very relevant. The General Assembly had made noteworthy efforts to formulate instruments to combat international terrorism. In 1994 it had adopted the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, contained in the annex to its resolution 49/60; in 1996 it had established the Ad Hoc Committee by resolution 51/210 and had renewed its mandate every year since then. The work of the Committee had resulted in the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings in 1997 and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism in 1999. Although work had begun on a less than promising note in 2000, the situation had subsequently improved with the Working Group's negotiations on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism proposed by the delegation of India. As the representative of France had indicated, that convention should fill existing gaps in the body of instruments to combat terrorism, while preserving the progress that had been made. It was also necessary to adopt an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, because possible attacks of that kind posed a grave threat to the civilian population.

47. Slovakia had made progress in several areas in the prevention and elimination of international terrorism. On 26 October 2000, its Parliament had approved the ratification of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf and the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. The respective instruments ratifying those treaties would be deposited in due course, when they had been signed by the President of the Republic of Slovakia, which would then be party to 11 of the 12 international anti-terrorism conventions. In addition, Slovakia would sign the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism in January 2001.

48. **Mr. Al-Naman** (Saudi Arabia) emphasized that his Government supported the efforts of the international community to combat the scourge of terrorism. Saudi Arabia had been the first country to

sign the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism, adopted in 1999, and had participated in numerous conferences on the issue, collaborated in the formulation of strategies to combat terrorism and organized specialized training seminars on the matter.

49. With regard to the draft convention proposed by India, his delegation believed that it could not be considered comprehensive because it did not contain an exhaustive definition of the term "terrorism", nor did it establish a distinction between international terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples against oppression in defence of their right to self-determination, or include among terrorist acts attacks by armed forces against the civilian population, such as those by the Israeli army. In the absence of such elements, the convention would only be a repetition of previous texts. With regard to the proposal submitted by Malaysia on behalf of the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (A/C.6/55/WG.1/CRP.30), he regretted that there had been insufficient time to examine it and hoped that it would be possible to do so in the near future. Lastly, he expressed support for Iran's proposal concerning the draft comprehensive convention, which had the merit of filling in the gaps left by previous conventions and agreements. His delegation also commended Australia's efforts on the subject of nuclear terrorism and reiterated its support for the proposal formulated by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to include the acts of military forces within the draft convention's scope of application.

50. **Mr. Lavalle-Valdez** (Guatemala) said that, as stated in Security Council resolution 1189 (1998), the suppression of acts of international terrorism was essential for the maintenance of international peace and security, which was the fundamental purpose of the United Nations. Hence, the question had appeared on the agenda of the General Assembly since 1972; the Assembly had recently adopted, without a vote, two declarations setting out the general principles for combating terrorism; and the Security Council had adopted a resolution on the issue in 1999. It was also significant that there were 12 international conventions requiring the many States parties to them to apply specific provisions against terrorist acts or to punish financing and material support for international terrorism, that another sectoral convention and a comprehensive convention were in preparation, and that the possibility of convening an international conference on the issue was under consideration. However, it had not been possible to protect the international community fully against terrorism. Therefore the courts and law enforcement bodies of each country should not flag in their efforts to eradicate the scourge, and the United Nations and other international forums should continue their efforts to create pertinent new international mechanisms.

51. Terrorist acts were crimes that went to the essence of criminal law, but involved additional elements that made them more deadly: the fact that any human being could be the victim of an attack and the magnitude of the harm that could be inflicted by a terrorist act due to the lethal power of modern weapons. Unlike other crimes, in which violence was not the end but the means or was directed against specific individuals only, the immediate purpose of the terrorist was to kill the greatest possible number of people, whoever they might be. Moreover, terrorism caused considerable damage to harmonious relations between States and, at the national level, to democratic institutions. That characteristic made it a threat to international peace and security and, as the two declarations adopted by the General Assembly set out, was largely the result of some States being voluntarily involved, directly or indirectly, in acts of terrorism.

52. He noted that, although the current status of treaties relating to terrorism deposited with the Secretary-General, as well as the texts of the corresponding reservations and declarations, could be found on the United Nations web site, that was not the case for treaties deposited with the executive directors of other intergovernmental organizations. His delegation therefore suggested that the Secretariat should create a web site on which all information relating to such treaties, updated at least once a week, would be available.

53. *Mr. Politi (Italy) resumed the Chair.*

54. **Mr. Erwa** (Sudan) said that in May 2000 his Government had sent the Secretary-General a message informing him that Sudan had become a party to six major international conventions relating to international terrorism, in addition to the four it had already ratified. Furthermore, on the occasion of the Millennium Summit, the President of Sudan had deposited the instrument of ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of

Terrorist Bombings, of 1997, and had also signed the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, currently open for signature. He could therefore affirm that Sudan was a party to all the international conventions relating to terrorism, a fact of which his delegation was proud and hoped might serve as an example for others.

55. The decade of the 1990s had seen political machinations and a disinformation campaign to accuse Sudan of supporting terrorism, with the deliberate aim of reversing the true roles and painting the terrorists as victims and the victims as terrorists. The only appropriate response to such an accusation was to speak the truth, namely, that Sudan's only weapon was the faith of its people, who rejected terrorism as clearly contradictory to the values they held dear. Attacks against women and children and the destruction of property were contrary to the religious and humanitarian values of Sudan. His delegation called for international cooperation in eliminating that threat to international peace and in building a peace based on humanity and justice and on support for a future founded on coexistence.

56. In previous resolutions the General Assembly had reaffirmed the need for States to refrain from financing and supporting terrorist activities and had shown the threat which State terrorism posed to international stability and peace. The General Assembly must continue to combat State terrorism by establishing mechanisms and programmes for that purpose.

57. At a time of increasing globalization, no State which exploited terrorism to achieve its political ends and supported armed movements that sought to destabilize a country by killing innocent civilians and spreading disease and epidemics could have credibility. As an example, he might mention the terrorist acts carried out in Kassala, the "City of Poetry", located on the border with Eritrea, which had caused the deaths of more than 100 innocent people and destroyed homes and civilian infrastructure. No Member State of the United Nations could justify such terrorist and criminal acts, which struck not only at women and children but at human rights, specifically the right to life. It was outrageous for the minister for foreign affairs of a certain State to have described the head of the terrorist group responsible as a "refined, dynamic, dedicated and determined" person.

58. The United Nations, through the Sixth Committee, had undertaken the difficult task of completing the last component of the framework of legal instruments for combating international terrorism, a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, using the draft proposed by India as a starting point. The draft was broad in scope and dealt with issues closely related to peace and security inasmuch as it defined State terrorism and the offence of financing terrorist acts, the latter being the method most often employed by States to support terrorists. Sudan reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to combating terrorism in any form and called for acts of terrorism, as well as the promotion, financing, encouragement, support and diplomatic cover of such acts, to be criminalized.

59. Humanitarian intervention was currently a popular concept, but from a juridical, moral or political standpoint, it could at times be dangerous to describe as humanitarian assistance the efforts of some States whose intention was to use such assistance to reinforce their influence and promote their own interests. In order for globalization and humanitarian assistance to achieve satisfactory results, certain States must be prevented from financing or supporting terrorist groups, and the international community must endeavour to ensure that conflicts were settled peacefully and in good faith.

60. His delegation considered the destruction of a bridge, a factory or an embassy, or an attack against a child, to be acts of terrorism which quite rightly aroused an international humanitarian response. He called on States to put an end to the use of violence to further political aims and also called on them to promote and ensure compliance with existing international instruments, if they wished to allow for continued optimism with regard to the future of the human race.

61. **Mr. Diab** (Lebanon) reaffirmed his Government's position that the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism offered the possibility of resolving issues that had not been considered in previous conventions. That position was based on two guiding principles: first, that terrorism was a grave evil that threatened democratic societies and should be combated as an element of organized crime; Lebanon was opposed to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Secondly, the concept of terrorism should be defined and should be differentiated from

acts relating to the liberation struggle or resistance to occupying forces. Thus, a distinction should be drawn between violence against civilians, as a political, racist and religious objective, and military acts against armed forces of occupation, based on peoples' legitimate right to fight for their freedom, independence and dignity.

62. Lebanon's position was governed by international law, which protected its rights, dignity and sovereignty. Lebanon did not possess nuclear arms or weapons of mass destruction, but only its people's faith in their land and in their right to defend their country and its sovereignty, which had allowed it to resist Israeli occupation for 22 years and, finally, to liberate the country and put an end to the occupation. In the absence of an international legal framework to protect it, Lebanon had paid a very high price for that resistance, because the occupying forces had made no distinction between civilians and soldiers and had perpetrated repeated killings. A telling example was the 1996 Israeli raid on the United Nations, which was the very symbol of peace, in the town of Qana. It was painful for Lebanon to listen to jurists saying that they were tired of the argument regarding the distinction between the legitimate right of peoples to self-determination and the acts of genocide and bombings of the occupying Power. That was tantamount to saying that the principles of international law and human rights were separable, justified in one context and not in another. The events of Qana, a town of sacred and religious significance, demonstrated that not even that symbol of peace was inviolable, and it was therefore difficult to understand why it was not possible to include wording in the draft convention that would protect civilians from the terrorism of an occupying Power. Lebanon insisted on its right to continue making that distinction. On that basis, his delegation supported the draft comprehensive convention against international terrorism and reiterated its support for all international measures to combat terrorism and strengthen international cooperation to that end.

63. His delegation also wished to insist on the need to deal with the causes of terrorism and not restrict the debate to expressing condemnations and imposing sanctions. In that respect, it referred to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/502), of 20 October 2000, and, in particular, to paragraph 15, in which reference was made to the need for prevention strategies to address the root causes of violent conflict and the environments that promoted it.

64. His delegation condemned the savagery of Israeli terrorism and emphasized that, to be stable and sustainable, the solutions to the conflict should be based on the decisions and resolutions of international law and on the essential principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In that respect, his delegation reiterated its support for the international community's efforts to develop a legal framework to put an end to international terrorism and protect international peace and security. He underlined the importance, however, of including certain provisions in the draft, in particular the proposal contained in document A/C.6/55/WG.1/CRP.37 that special reference should be made in the preamble to the convention to General Assembly resolution 46/51 of 9 December 1991, to the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations and to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Nevertheless, his delegation's position would be similar to the one it took when General Assembly resolution 54/110 was adopted.

Agenda item 155: Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts (*continued*) (A/C.6/55/L.15)

65. **The Chairman** said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.6/55/L.15 without a vote.

66. *Draft resolution A/C.6/55/L.15 was adopted.*

67. **Mr. Becker** (Israel), explaining his delegation's position following the adoption of the resolution, said that it would be recalled that Israel had taken an active and substantive role in the diplomatic conference convened between 1974 and 1977 at which the two additional protocols had been adopted, thereby demonstrating the importance which Israel attached to the development of international humanitarian law.

68. His delegation wished to take the opportunity to acknowledge the important contribution of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to the codification and development of international humanitarian law. Israel enjoyed a unique and close working relationship with ICRC, rarely found in other field situations in which the latter operated.

69. Israel had not been alone in expressing concern regarding certain aspects of the additional protocols. A significant number of States and leading scholars had questioned the legal basis of various provisions of the protocols. The effectiveness of international humanitarian law and of ICRC was predicated on complete neutrality and impartiality. When instruments of international humanitarian law were applied for political purposes, the result was a weakening of their stature and thereby a risk of harm to the very people they were designed to protect. Israel had been prevented from becoming a party to the additional protocols because political terminology had been introduced into the text. For example, rather than using objective criteria for the scope and application of Protocol I, subjective political factors had been incorporated in article 1, paragraph 4. Similarly, articles 43 and 44 appeared to undermine the established principles of international humanitarian law regarding the duty of combatants to comply with the laws of war and the basic requirement that combatants should distinguish themselves clearly from the civilian population.

70. While the text of draft resolution A/C.6/55/L.15 was on the whole unobjectionable, his delegation would have abstained had the text been put to a vote.

71. His delegation wished to take the opportunity to address the continuing exclusion of Israel's national society, Magen David Adom, from the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Pursuant to resolution 3 adopted at the twenty-seventh International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in November 1999, efforts had been under way to adopt a third protocol which would, inter alia, ensure a truly universal Movement and end the unjust exclusion of Magen David Adom and other national societies which did not use the Red Cross or Red Crescent emblems. In that regard, it would perhaps have been appropriate for draft resolution A/C.6/55/L.15 to make some reference to the efforts being made towards the adoption of a third protocol. It was also regrettable that the reference to the holding of the twenty-seventh International Conference had been removed from the preamble of the text.

72. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 155.

Agenda item 156: Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives (*continued*) (A/C.6/55/L.8 and Corr.1)

73. **The Chairman** said that Nigeria and Thailand had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

74. **Mr. Peralta** (Mexico), explaining his delegation's position, said that Mexico would support the adoption of draft resolution A/C.6/55/L.8 and Corr.1. His delegation was convinced that the adoption of measures for the protection of missions and officials were vitally important in ensuring the development of relations among States. Privileges and immunities were granted to enable officials and missions to rely on the necessary security in carrying out their functions, and they should not be used for other purposes. Mexico therefore rejected the abuse of privileges and immunities and interpreted the text of paragraph 8 of the draft resolution, as on previous occasions, in the sense that the sending State was responsible for the abuse of those privileges and must, when necessary, punish abuses committed by its representatives, within the appropriate international legal framework.

75. **The Chairman** said that if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

76. *Draft resolution A/C.6/55/L.8 and Corr.1 was adopted.*

77. **The Chairman** said the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 156.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

United Nations A/C.6/55/SR.29

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Chairman: Mr. Politi ..... (Italy)
later: Mr. Suheimat (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Jordan)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 164: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (*continued*) (A/55/37, A/55/179 and Add.1; A/C.6/54/L.2)

1. **Mr. Akhmedjanov** (Uzbekistan), speaking on behalf of the Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan group of States, said that one of the greatest threats to international and regional security was international terrorism, which had grown in scope and effectiveness in achieving its ends. Coordination of the efforts of the international community was therefore essential to combat the phenomenon, and there the United Nations had a key role to play. In the 28 years since the item had been added to the agenda of the General Assembly, the international community had made important progress in consolidating the legal foundation for combating terrorism, for example, by adopting the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Such efforts must continue, and it was to be hoped that States would also approve the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and complete the drafting of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It would be difficult to build a juster and safer world without a concerted effort on the part of the international community to confront the new challenges posed by globalization, the potentially disastrous consequences, of which including computer terrorism, were not yet fully understood.

2. It was also important to highlight the relation between religious extremism and terrorism, which created conditions favourable to the operations of terrorist groups. Terrorist acts, which harmed the innocent, could not be justified by any ideology. Another aspect of the international community's efforts to combat terrorism to be stressed was that any measures adopted at the international, regional or national levels, must be consistent with the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

3. Combating terrorism was one of the priorities for the member States of the group of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, as indicated in the statement of 24 April 1999, contained in document A/54/94, in which the Presidents of those States had expressed their concern at the increased number of acts of terrorism, recognized the necessity to combat terrorism in all its manifestations and decided to spare no effort in the fight against ethnic intolerance, separatism, religious extremism and terrorism. At the meeting of the Presidents of the group's member States in New York on 6 September 2000, they had also raised the question of establishing an international anti-terrorism centre. Moreover, an international conference on strengthening stability in Central Asia held in Tashkent from 19 to 21 October 1999, had adopted a document on cooperation in combating drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism.

4. It was not enough, however, merely to adopt legal instruments; States must make other commitments within the framework of the United Nations. To date the only office of the Organization responsible for combating terrorism was the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, and that was understaffed. The member States of the group shared the concern expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/55/179) with regard to the lack of human resources preventing the Branch from fulfilling its mandate adequately. One measure that could help to remedy that situation would be the creation of an international centre for combating terrorism, which would involve broadening the mandate of the Branch and increasing its staff.

5. **Mr. Shihab** (Maldives) said that the end of the cold war had not eliminated the chief obstacle to international peace and security. Although he welcomed the progress made by the international community in the area of security, he was concerned that terrorism, which also threatened the stability of States, had become an international phenomenon affecting the entire world. That development was even more worrisome since terrorists were taking advantage of technological advances and had easy access to increasingly lethal and dangerous arms and weaponry, which made their actions all the more effective. Cyber-terrorism, for example, in the form of simultaneous attacks on various institutions and networks, could threaten the international community at large. Efforts to eliminate terrorism therefore required the support of that entire community.

6. Maldives was a small peace-loving State and enjoyed excellent relations with all its neighbours. It was, however, particularly vulnerable to terrorism, as

had been shown in 1998 when a band of mercenaries had attempted to install a puppet regime in order to finance terrorist activities in another country. International cooperation was essential for the security of small States faced with terrorist attacks, because they generally lacked the means to defend themselves against such threats. For that reason his delegation had sponsored resolutions on the protection and security of small States in 1989, 1991 and 1994 and remained convinced that a long-term solution to the problem required, among other things, the establishment of a multilateral mechanism to assist small States in protecting their security, sovereignty and territorial integrity in time of need. Such assistance should be regarded as a political and moral obligation on the part of the international community.

7. Maldives was a party to the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and welcomed the progress made in strengthening the legal regime for combating terrorism. His delegation hoped that that Convention, along with the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, would receive the required number of ratifications to enter into force in the near future. It looked forward to the early conclusion of the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and supported the convening of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

8. **Mr. Becker** (Israel) said that terrorism flourished in an atmosphere of disunity in the international community. The Sixth Committee, which was charged with providing States with the legal tools to fight terrorism, therefore had a vital role to play. All States must therefore heed the appeal of the General Assembly in its resolution 54/110, condemning "all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomsoever committed", and must ensure respect for the Declaration on Friendly Relations contained in General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV).

9. His delegation supported legal action measures on three levels. First, States should adopt and enforce national laws targeting terrorism. Second, the international community should take firm measures against States that provided a safe haven for terrorists, supported their activities or refrained from acting against them. Lastly, measures should be taken through regional and international agreements to ensure that the fight against terrorism was coordinated and continuous. His delegation also supported efforts to draft a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

10. Some States maintained that an act such as planting a bomb in a market place should not be regarded as terrorism if its purpose was national liberation, a position that ignored international law and many United Nations resolutions. Furthermore, it did a grave injustice to legitimate liberation movements, which refrained from attacking the innocent and respected the freedoms of others. Regrettably, some delegations had used their statements to make accusations against Israel. He recalled that two days earlier he had spoken before the Committee on the level of terror to which Israel had been subjected in recent days and weeks. He also recalled the statement by the Minister of Communications of Palestine, who had said: "I am not saying we are not terrorists. We are proud to carry out terrorist attacks against our enemy, against Israel". Nevertheless, his Government remained committed to breaking the cycle of bloodshed in the Middle East and to move together with its neighbours towards a peaceful future. The international community, for its part, must redouble its efforts against the enemies of peace, unequivocally support the settlement of all conflicts by negotiation and reject any attempt to derive political gain from terrorism.

11. **Mr. Galicki** (Poland) said that his delegation aligned itself with the statement by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, and was particularly concerned at the tendency of terrorism to go beyond national borders. Poland felt deep sympathy for the suffering of the victims of terrorist acts perpetrated in distant parts of the world and condemned all such acts, which could not be justified for any political or other reason. Fully aware that international cooperation was the principal factor in combating terrorism, Poland had signed, ratified or acceded to 11 international or regional conventions relating to the prevention and elimination of international terrorism, and it welcomed the progress made by the Working Group of the Sixth Committee.

12. As the representative of France had rightly mentioned, the international community had been able to provide itself with the means to organize against

international terrorism by taking a sectoral approach. Cooperation in that area had progressed sufficiently to envisage the elaboration of a comprehensive convention dealing with the issue as a whole, as reflected in the draft proposed by the delegation of India. His delegation welcomed that proposal and hoped that it would be possible to reach an agreement on issues still pending, including the scope of the draft. It would also like to see work on the text of the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism completed as soon as possible. The international community must not fail to take advantage of the unique opportunity offered to create an effective, comprehensive system of anti-terrorist law.

13. **Mr. Nejad Hosseinian** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Secretary-General's report on measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/55/179) attested to the fact that international terrorism posed a serious threat to peace and security and continued to claim thousands of innocent lives every year, disrupting relations among States. No country was immune from the effects of that heinous crime. By using modern technology, terrorists posed an even greater threat to normal life in civil societies governed by the rule of law. Accordingly, it was imperative to strengthen cooperation at the bilateral, regional and international levels towards eliminating that scourge. As a member of the international community, the Islamic Republic of Iran had been suffering from terrorist activities perpetrated by an organization which received material, political and logistical support from a neighbouring country. That organization had claimed responsibility for a number of attacks carried out in the previous year against civilian targets. Its members used false names to secure safe havens in other States, with whose backing they continued to commit acts of terrorism. Some of them had even found their way to the United Nations, under the protection provided by some irresponsible non-governmental organizations.

14. His Government shared the increasing concern of the international community over acts of terrorism carried out by individuals, groups and States, and had redoubled its efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It had established a number of bilateral committees with neighbouring countries and States from other regions in order to consolidate the fight against terrorists and drug traffickers, including those from areas under Taliban control. However, he wished to reiterate that the fight against terrorism should be in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the relevant conventions. Making false and unfounded allegations against others in pursuance of a domestic agenda or for concealed political motives was not conducive to the collective struggle against terrorism. Moreover, flexible asylum policies that helped terrorists to evade justice were contrary to the recommendations contained in the declarations adopted by the General Assembly in 1994 and 1996.

15. Since no nation could combat terrorism unilaterally, it was absolutely necessary to adopt universal, non-discriminatory measures to deprive terrorists of their means of operation, recruitment and funding. The United Nations should continue its efforts with a view to the elaboration of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. The Working Group had held useful discussions on the draft convention submitted by India. He hoped that deliberations on the various proposals would continue. However, he wished to make some general comments in that regard.

16. First, the comprehensive approach raised once again the issue of defining the term "terrorism". It was indispensable to arrive at a generally agreed definition. In that regard, he wished to refer to the proposal submitted by the Malaysian delegation on behalf of the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (A/C.6/55/WG.1/CRP.30), which distinguished terrorism from the struggle of peoples against foreign hegemony and occupation. The recent tragic events in the Middle East confirmed the relevance of such a distinction. In that region, an occupier regime continued to employ all means at its disposal and in contravention of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, to suppress and terrorize, in a barbaric manner, the inhabitants of the lands it occupied, while labelling them as terrorists. However, they were not terrorists but native people of Palestine struggling to liberate their territories. His delegation wished to take the opportunity to offer its condolences to the fraternal people of Palestine on the loss of lives, including the lives of women and children, caused by the Israeli forces in recent weeks.

17. Second, the Ad Hoc Committee should consider some of the regional agreements to combat terrorism, including the Convention of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism adopted in 1999

(A/54/637), with a view to incorporating in the comprehensive convention the valuable experiences acquired in different parts of the world. Moreover, the relationship of the proposed comprehensive convention with the existing agreements and conventions should be considered. Although during the Working Group's deliberations many delegations had expressed their preference for maintaining the existing instruments for combating terrorism, the Committee could explore the possibility of elaborating an umbrella convention which might facilitate the ratification of existing instruments through a single action if States parties to the future convention so desired.

18. Finally, his delegation had serious problems with article 18, paragraph 2, of the draft comprehensive convention, since the meaning of the phrase "in the exercise of their official duties" was unclear and left room for expanding the immunities enjoyed by military forces under international law. While no one disputed the fact that the activities of military forces during an armed conflict were covered by the law applicable to such conflict, such immunity could not be accorded during peace time under a comprehensive convention covering a range of criminal acts.

19. His delegation had taken note of paragraph 20 of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee (A/55/37) on the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and encouraged the coordinator of the informal consultations to pursue her efforts with a view to ensuring the adoption of the convention by consensus as soon as possible. Concerning the convening of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, his delegation was of the view that the Ad Hoc Committee should first concentrate its efforts on finalizing the two draft projects on its agenda. It might subsequently consider convening a conference for the adoption of the conventions.

20. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria) said that, despite the international community's efforts to combat terrorism, that scourge continued to claim countless human lives and cause incalculable damage to property, threatening the internal security of States and international peace and security. Terrorism had worsened because of its ability to adapt to globalization and use ever more sophisticated methods as well as its increasingly closer ties with other criminal activities such as drug trafficking, money laundering and arms trafficking. Terrorism was one of the worst scourges of modern times and ran counter to all that the United Nations stood for, since it attacked the fundamental principles of democracy, human rights and people's well-being, in addition to adversely affecting the socio-economic development of countries.

21. Since the initial appearance of the topic of terrorism on the General Assembly's agenda, the Assembly had adopted many resolutions, decisions and recommendations to prevent and combat that scourge at the national, regional and international levels. At the Millennium Summit and during the current session of the General Assembly, terrorism had once again been unanimously and unequivocally condemned and the need had been reiterated for taking concerted action to combat it. In that regard, he welcomed the Security Council's support for the fight against terrorism, as reflected by the various Council resolutions that recognized the threat posed by terrorism to the peace and stability of nations.

22. International cooperation should be strengthened through the accession of all States to the relevant international instruments, cooperation in judicial matters and the exchange of information; otherwise, the international response against terrorism would continue to be inadequate. There was a need to address the problem in all its manifestations and to tackle all its sources of support, including logistical support, financial assistance, arms supplies and political backing. In that regard, it was deplorable to note that the perpetrators of terrorist attacks and their backers continued to find refuge in other countries, from which they continued to carry out with impunity activities that damaged the interests of their countries of origin and the relations between the latter and the countries of asylum. For that reason, States must honour their commitments and eschew selective or lax policies as well as the abusive or indulgent application of legal instruments, such as the right to asylum.

23. In recent years, significant progress had been made in the area of international law, including at the United Nations, with the adoption of conventions such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the negotiations on the draft comprehensive convention submitted by the Indian delegation. It was imperative to adopt a convention that comprehensively addressed

terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and took into account new forms of terrorism that were not covered under existing legal instruments. His delegation therefore urged all countries to continue to demonstrate a constructive and responsible attitude in order to achieve that objective as soon as possible. The United Nations was the appropriate institution for coordinating the activities of Member States in the fight against international terrorism. The General Assembly had already paved the way by adopting, on 9 December 1994, the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism. In that regard, his delegation fully supported the proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

24. Moreover, considerable progress had been made at the regional level, where consultations and cooperation were essential for establishing effective security arrangements and legal frameworks to supplement international initiatives. In that regard, he noted that such a process was being developed in the Mediterranean region and that there were other similar initiatives, in which Algeria was actively participating, within the framework of the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Those institutions had drawn up a number of instruments for combating terrorism, which had been signed and ratified by his country.

25. Algeria, which had always encouraged the international community to combat the scourge of terrorism in strict accordance with the principles of international law, had adopted national measures, acceded to relevant regional and international conventions and was trying to fully fit in with the frameworks of cooperation established at all levels. It would therefore welcome any initiative to enhance efficiency, cooperation and coordination in order to achieve the common goal of eradicating terrorism.

26. **Ms. Ibraimova** (Kyrgyzstan) said that the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism prepared by India would enable States parties to exercise their jurisdiction over terrorist offences and might, owing to its comprehensive nature, prove universally acceptable. Like other States in Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan had been the victim of international terrorism and religious extremism, together with illicit trafficking in drugs and weapons. Those problems were a grave threat to the stability and security of the entire Eurasian region. Incursions by terrorist groups in the south of the country in 1999 and in August 2000, and similar events in neighbouring States, showed that international terrorist organizations intended to use the territory of Central Asia to perpetrate their crimes.

27. It was obvious that no individual State could cope with terrorism on its own; collective measures were necessary. Noteworthy at the regional level was the work of the group of countries known as the "Shanghai Five" (China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan), which had held a meeting of Heads of State in July 2000. Those States had also established the "Bishkek Group", made up of the law-enforcement agencies and special services of the member States, to coordinate their actions in the prevention and suppression of terrorism, and would shortly set up an anti-terrorist centre in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan). Furthermore, the Heads of State of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation had met in Bishkek on 20 August 2000 to demonstrate the unanimous resolve of the Russian Federation and the countries of Central Asia to eradicate terrorism in their territories. In addition, the Council on Collective Security of the States parties to the Treaty on Collective Security within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan) had held a meeting in Bishkek in October 2000, at which the participants had drawn attention to the fact that the conflict in Afghanistan endangered the stability of the region and had proposed to convene a special meeting of the Council on Collective Security to agree on concrete measures to resolve the problem, with the participation of all the parties to the conflict. The States parties to the Treaty on Collective Security had urged the United Nations, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the international community as a whole to support them in their struggle against terrorism, extremism and separatism and had declared that any attempt to destroy the integrity of Central Asia would be repelled by the States parties. Lastly, they had announced that they would propose new measures to establish regional systems of collective security and strengthen political and military cooperation.

28. Kyrgyzstan had adopted laws in that regard and had become party to four of the international agreements and conventions against terrorism. It was also a party to the Treaty on Cooperation among States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Combating Terrorism (Minsk, 4 June 1999) and was considering acceding to the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and signing the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Only a collective effort by the international community could overcome that threat to security, stability, peace and order in the world. Her Government was therefore collaborating in the creation of an international legal system of measures to combat terrorism and other forms of extremism.

29. **Ms. Steains** (Australia) said that it was hard to imagine how any State could fail to unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations or to join the international consensus on eliminating that scourge. Australia was a party to nearly all the international treaties which obliged States to criminalize specific acts of terrorism and to cooperate with other States in preventing such acts and investigating and prosecuting them when they occurred. The only exceptions were the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which would be submitted to the parliamentary committee on treaties in early 2001. In addition to its participation in the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996, Australia was actively involved in regional forums and bilateral negotiations in order to intensify through international cooperation the efforts being made by all to prevent and, where they occurred, to punish terrorist acts.

30. Regarding the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, her delegation recognized that the existing regime did not cover all aspects, and would welcome the adoption of a comprehensive instrument to fill the gaps. The present regime, however, provided the strongest and most effective mechanism for responding to the complex phenomenon of terrorism, and the new draft convention should be complementary only and should not attempt to incorporate the areas covered by sectoral instruments.

31. Specific crimes required specific treatment, and the availability of separate instruments made possible the necessary degree of specialization to ensure the legal and practical effectiveness of each convention. Any attempt to cover all possible manifestations of terrorist crime in a single instrument would only succeed in weakening the international counter-terrorism regime as a whole. It should be borne in mind that if that network of legal instruments did not exist, there would be no multilateral legal means to promote cooperation in dealing with the problem. For example, in 30 years little progress had been made towards arriving at an agreed definition of the term "terrorism", and yet that had not prevented the elaboration of a truly robust and effective counter-terrorism regime.

32. The progress made by the international community in its struggle against terrorism should not cause it to slacken in its efforts. At the same time, the progress that progress should not be underestimated. The international community must not jeopardize the strong legal counter-terrorism regime already in place in an attempt to produce a comprehensive treaty which might inadvertently act as a disincentive to universal ratification of the existing instruments.

33. *The President of the General Assembly took a place at the Committee table.*

34. **Mr. Gizaw** (Ethiopia) said that his delegation attached particular importance to measures to eliminate international terrorism, not only because his country had been subjected to terrorist acts in recent years, but basically as a matter of principle. Ethiopia condemned all acts of terrorism irrespective of their form, motivation or manifestation and considered that there was no justification for such acts.

35. In order to combat the scourge of terrorism it was vital that cooperation at the international, regional and national levels should be strengthened. Ethiopia was a party to major international and regional instruments including the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and was committed to cooperate with all countries, especially neighbouring countries. At the national level, Parliament had recently enacted legislation to punish acts of terrorism such as the hijacking of aircraft, thereby demonstrating the Government's determination to take concrete measures against terrorism.

36. He welcomed the fruitful discussions which had been conducted on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. His delegation fully supported that effort which, while preserving the

progress that had been made by means of "sectoral" conventions on international terrorism, sought to create a comprehensive instrument to fill the gaps and complement existing agreements. Such a convention should help to consolidate the existing legal instruments and broaden the legal basis for combating terrorism.

37. Terrorism was an international crime which constituted a threat to the peace and security of all States and their peoples, especially when the terrorists were armed, financed and supported directly or indirectly by Governments. The United Nations must do everything possible to enhance international cooperation in the prevention and suppression of acts of international terrorism, and his delegation therefore supported the proposal to convene a high-level conference on terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations.

38. **Mr. Zhdanovich** (Belarus) said that combating international terrorism was a very important issue for his country. Belarus categorically condemned all acts of terrorism, regardless of the form they took or the objectives being pursued. His Government had always advocated effective international cooperation and concerted efforts by all States in the struggle against that scourge. The intensification of terrorism and its increasingly transnational character demanded global approaches, and an appropriate legal basis should be provided. The Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 was carrying out an important task in elaborating international conventions against terrorism and filling the gaps in international law. The adoption of a comprehensive convention, the draft of which was under consideration by the Working Group of the Sixth Committee, would provide a solid foundation for the implementation of existing agreements and would be a useful instrument in dealing with terrorism, a definition of which had not yet been agreed. He thanked India for having prepared the draft, which would establish an excellent basis for future work.

39. One of the important aspects to be dealt with by draft convention was the elimination of acts of nuclear terrorism. He hoped that, once adopted, the instrument would serve as a deterrent and that the international community would never have to implement any of its provisions.

40. The international community was in the process of defining measures to combat international terrorism. That process not only aimed to protect every country, but also showed how States could apply legal rules in dealing with the complex problems and changes in the modern world. A collective approach to the problem required consensus among all those working towards a solution, and a mechanism which would enable them to work together.

41. Belarus had entered into a number of bilateral agreements for cooperation in combating terrorism and was a party to most of the international conventions. His delegation supported the excellent idea of compiling and sharing among States information on their particular experiences in the struggle against terrorism and establishing mechanisms for training and consultancy in the use of that information. It fully agreed with the need to focus on practical cooperation among countries in areas such as the harmonization of domestic legislation, the application of preventive measures and investigation and prosecution of those responsible for terrorist acts.

42. Lastly, his delegation reiterated its strong condemnation of terrorism as a threat to the international community as a whole and offered its support for all efforts to combat it.

43. **Mr. Janda** (Czech Republic) said that his delegation aligned itself with the statements made on behalf of the European Union and wished to describe the legislative measures adopted recently in the Czech Republic for the suppression of terrorism. His delegation was participating in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210, and felt that the Committee had demonstrated its effectiveness as a legal tool in the struggle against international terrorism. Owing to the importance it attached to the legal instruments elaborated, the Czech Republic had ratified in September 2000 the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and had signed the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which it would ratify as soon as its domestic legislative process permitted.

44. The Czech Republic believed that the prestige of the Ad Hoc Committee would be strengthened if the current negotiations for a comprehensive convention on international terrorism produced positive results. The sectoral approach taken so far by the international

community had proved to be highly satisfactory; however, the comprehensive convention currently being negotiated could establish a general definition of terrorism, thereby providing the international legal framework so far lacking in that area. His delegation believed that the definition of terrorism for the purposes of the international convention should be modelled on article 2 of the revised draft version, without the addition of any new conceptual elements.

45. As for the relationship between the comprehensive convention and the sectoral conventions, while the problem was important, its complexity should not be exaggerated. The main goal was to preserve the mechanisms created by the partial conventions without undermining the legal value of the comprehensive convention. In most cases, the comprehensive convention and the sectoral conventions could be applied simultaneously. In conclusion, he welcomed the positive atmosphere which had characterized the first round of negotiations on the draft submitted by India, despite the complexity of the political and legal issues it raised, and he trusted that work on it would proceed diligently at the forthcoming session of the Ad Hoc Committee in February 2001.

46. **Mr. Mukongo Ngay** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that his country supported the statement made by the representative of Tanzania on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Nearly all regions of the world had to some degree been exposed to the devastating threat of terrorism, a phenomenon that was to be condemned in all its aspects.

47. The effectiveness of the struggle against terrorism depended on the cooperation of States and the capacity of each State to take the necessary measures at the national level. The Democratic Republic of the Congo had always taken measures at both levels. Its domestic legislation was characterized by an anti-terrorist legal culture which was reflected in effective preventive measures, for example, the requirement to obtain the authorization of the President of the Republic to import, store, withdraw, ship, sell and possess firearms and their components and ammunition. The law prohibited anyone who was not in the military from possessing weapons of war.

48. At the international level, the Democratic Republic of the Congo recognized the precedence of international law over domestic law, and had signed or ratified a number of international conventions relating to the question of international terrorism, for example, the recent Convention of the Organization of African Unity on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, adopted in Algiers on 14 July 1999.

49. There was still no consensus on the elaboration of the final draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, the question of convening a high-level conference to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations had not yet been decided, and further consultations were needed on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism proposed by India. While his delegation understood the difficulties, which had to do with the complexity of the phenomenon and the diversity of its manifestations, it encouraged all parties to redouble their efforts with a view to adopting the draft comprehensive convention.

50. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, however, cautioned against the potential dangers of the draft convention that could impede the attainment of its objectives. The comprehensive convention should not equate terrorism with the legitimate struggle of peoples for self-determination and self-defence in the face of foreign aggression and occupation. Moreover, the convention should cover all aspects of terrorism, including State terrorism, which was its most dangerous form. Otherwise, it would give carte blanche to countries like Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, which had for more than two years committed genuine acts of State terrorism in the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, under the pretext of guaranteeing the security of their borders. To that end, they had committed atrocities and murders with the deliberate intention of traumatizing the survivors. He described various atrocities and mentioned the substantial material damage caused by agents of terrorist States, whose sole intention was to take possession of the diamonds and other wealth of cities such as Kisangani, located more than 1,000 km from the border. That was a form of international terrorism with grave consequences, which many delegations characterized as State terrorism and should not escape the regime of the future convention.

51. He reiterated his support for the proposal by the representative of India on the adoption of a universal definition of terrorism and the elaboration of a detailed

and universal anti-terrorist convention, and reaffirmed his country's intention to cooperate to the fullest extent possible in the finalization of the anti-terrorist instruments under consideration.

52. **Mr. Wehbe** (Syrian Arab Republic) reiterated his delegation's total condemnation of international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whether it was committed by individuals, groups or, in particular, States. The Syrian Arab Republic had acceded to the great majority of relevant international instruments, and its domestic legislation provided for very severe penalties in cases of terrorism.

53. For several weeks, the occupied Palestinian territory had been subjected to daily acts of terrorism by Israel, in violation of the norms of international law. Although the press was reporting on those atrocities, the world had closed its eyes to that tragedy and nothing had been done to put an end to it. There had already been more than 210 deaths and thousands of injuries; however, Israel persisted in its terrorist mentality. Nor should the thousands of Lebanese martyrs of the past be forgotten. Israeli leaders had been practising terrorism in all its forms and manifestations for many years, and Israel's intolerant terrorist philosophy did not distinguish between guilty and innocent. There was no reason not to bring to justice the Israeli leaders responsible for war crimes in the occupied territories. At the two summits convened in 2000 by the Arab and Islamic world, one in Cairo and the other in Doha, the genocide committed by Israel had been condemned. At the fifth special session of the Commission on Human Rights, held recently in Geneva, the provocative visit to Al-Haram Al-Sharif by Ariel Sharon, which had triggered the tragic events that had followed in occupied East Jerusalem and the other occupied Palestinian territories, had been condemned (E/CN.4/RES/S-5/1).

54. There was no balance in today's world. The liberation of national territory was considered a struggle in some parts of the world and terrorism in others. Neither limited nor sectoral criteria should be applied in considering the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism (A/C.6/55/1), but rather a humanistic approach in order to achieve a comprehensive justice which was not selective. The draft attempted to fill lacunae and gaps in existing instruments, taking into account the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Owing to the sectoral approach taken thus far, a fundamental question had not yet been addressed: the definition of terrorism. Acts of terrorism should be clearly characterized, as they were in domestic legislations. Nor had it been possible to decide on the title of the instrument. He recognized the efforts made in the Working Group to schedule a second reading of the revised texts of the draft articles already considered. The Working Group had had no time to consider the preamble, some articles or some written proposals submitted by certain States. The concerns expressed by all countries should be taken into account and, in that connection, he drew particular attention to documents A/C.6/55/WG.1/CRP.30, CRP.37 and CRP.38. The armed forces should not be excluded from the scope of the convention and State terrorism should also be contemplated. It would be difficult to ensure wide acceptance of the convention if it did not include a definition of terrorism and of the crime of terrorism or the right to oppose foreign occupation. It was quite possible, however, to arrive at a definition of terrorism, provided that the international community had the sincere political will to do so.

55. Back in 1986, the Syrian Arab Republic had proposed distinguishing between terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples (A/42/58, annex). The right of self-determination, taking into account the particular situation of peoples under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, had been reaffirmed in the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations (A/RES/50/6). It was to be hoped that the high-level international conference to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism would serve to clarify those questions.

56. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had reservations and had expressed concern with regard to certain parts of the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. Work would be complete only when that draft covered State nuclear terrorism. Currently, nuclear power was exclusively in the hands of the governmental authorities and not of individuals. Although nuclear devices fell into private hands, at least it was doubtful that those individuals could perpetrate terrorist activities without State support. The activities of armed forces, referred to in article 4 of the draft, should not be excluded.

57. General Assembly resolution 51/46 should be mentioned in the draft resolution on the item under

consideration. Referring to it in 1999 had made it possible to adopt by consensus the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (A/RES/54/109). Its omission would create unacceptable ambiguity, in which case the Syrian Arab Republic would be compelled to request that the draft should be put to a vote.

58. **Mr. Al-Dailmi** (Yemen) said that the human species, by nature, aspired to peace and security, and to live in a climate of brotherhood and cooperation; however, terrorism, which knew no religious or geographical bounds and had been universally condemned as a crime devoid of all justification, was attempting to destroy all human values and sow terror among all peoples. Yemen respected the Charter of the United Nations and the human rights conventions and had acceded to all the conventions to combat terrorism, a phenomenon which it condemned in all its forms and manifestations. Moreover, his Government had adopted a number of laws to that end. For example, Act No. 5 of 2000 had authorized the Government to sign the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, while Act no. 11 had authorized it to accede to the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages and the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf. In addition, the Yemeni authorities were taking all necessary measures to enforce those and other laws.

59. Yemen declared its solidarity with the Palestinian people, the innocent victim of terrorist acts perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces, and called on the international community to ensure the protection of that people. His delegation also expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Working Group for their reports on measures to eliminate terrorism. Despite the efforts made in the past decade, the seriousness of some acts of terrorism had increased. The attack perpetrated against the United States Navy ship in Yemen with the aim of damaging relations between the two countries and impeding Yemen's economic development was an example. His Government was cooperating with the United States in the relevant investigations, with a view to prosecuting and punishing the authors of the crime. Yemen appealed to all Governments to make greater efforts to put an end to such acts, regardless of whether they were the doing of States or individuals. It unconditionally supported the resolution on combating international terrorism, adopted by the Security Council in 1999 (S/RES/1269 (1999)). Moreover, the proposal to elaborate a comprehensive convention on international terrorism was very appropriate, since such an instrument would fill existing gaps in the other conventions in that area. It was to be hoped that its adoption would mark the beginning of a period of peace in the world in which all human rights could be fully enjoyed.

60. *Mr. Suheimat (Jordan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

61. **Mr. Morshed** (Bangladesh) said that the Ad Hoc Committee played a key role in shaping legal techniques to deal with the many faceted aspects of terrorism. The report of the Secretary-General on measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/55/179) was of great value both as a reference document and as a means of charting progress achieved in that field. His Government once again expressed its abhorrence of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; it recognized that the United Nations had achieved significant progress in drawing up instruments to combat terrorism, particularly the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Bangladesh was reviewing the relevant instruments with a view to early signature, ratification or accession and was studying the need for domestic legislation on the subject and means of implementation.

62. Bangladesh welcomed the initiative to prepare a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which would provide a basis for consensus in dealing with the problem and would underpin the broad international cooperation which was necessary to deal effectively with that phenomenon. The excellent draft prepared by India could serve as a basis for continued consideration within the Ad Hoc Committee. As to the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, Bangladesh recognized the progress made by the Ad Hoc Committee and hoped that agreement would be reached within the context of the positions articulated by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Lastly, his delegation believed that the holding of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations could serve to formulate a global response to terrorism; the initiative must be

preceded by painstaking preparations in order to be assured of success.

63. **Mr. Biato** (Brazil) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by Colombia on behalf of the Rio Group; since the question of international terrorism had first been taken up, in 1972, much progress had been achieved in coordinating efforts to combat that global menace. More recently, the Ad Hoc Committee had played an important role in helping the international community build the broad network of conventions which were now in place. The Organization of American States had set up an institutional framework to enhance concerted action at the regional level through instruments such as the 1996 Lima Declaration and Plan of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate Terrorism and the 1998 Mar del Plata Commitment, which condemned terrorist acts, irrespective of political, ideological, ethnic or religious considerations.

64. Terrorism took on as many forms as there were excuses to resort to violence, and globalization and technological innovations had strengthened the links between terrorism and other modern scourges, with grave consequences. The United Nations had taken up some aspects of the problem, such as the issue of small arms, the free trade of which made it easier for terrorists to acquire them. Another issue was the protection of civilians: just as the international community repudiated acts of violence against civilians in times of war, it must unequivocally condemn terrorist acts against innocent and defenceless persons. The relationship between terrorism and drug trafficking demonstrated how difficult it was at times to distinguish terrorism from other forms of criminal activities. The ample financial resources and the potential for corruption of those groups made them a serious danger to society. The fight against terrorism therefore called for increasingly coordinated and overarching strategies.

65. Brazil believed that the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism prepared by the delegation of India was a solid basis for work in that sphere. The text had been improved as a result of the earlier negotiations, particularly those relating to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and its innovative clauses that recognized the complexities of combating transnational criminal activities. However, the Committee must strive for a text that was truly comprehensive, rather than one that was meant only to fill in the gaps within the current legal framework. The comprehensive convention should make it possible to move forward in the codification of international law and should not simply be an optional protocol which extended the prosecute-or-extradite provisions to areas not currently covered by sectoral instruments. In order to lessen the inevitable overlap with existing conventions, it would be necessary to establish an effective relationship between general and specific instruments. The adoption of a truly comprehensive convention would help enhance the role of the United Nations in combating international terrorism and would send out the message that terrorism must be fought with determination as well as with an understanding of the tragedies and frustrations which often lay at its source.

66. **Mr. Al-Saidi** (Kuwait) said that his delegation welcomed the work on the preparation of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, and in that respect supported the proposal made by Malaysia, on behalf of the States members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Terrorism was one of the serious problems facing the international community, because of the threat it posed and the fact that no State, small or large, could escape its consequences. During the final years of the twentieth century, there had been a growth in the forms and manifestations of the phenomenon, and an increase in the number of victims. Terrorism derived from an extremist form of thinking, which was not confined to one region or one religion in particular. For that reason, Kuwait supported the proposal to hold an international conference at which the international community could formulate a joint response to terrorism and establish a legal framework for combating that scourge. The conference would also provide an opportunity to draw up a common definition of terrorism.

67. Kuwait reiterated its rejection and condemnation of all acts of terrorism, whatever their form or origin. It supported efforts to pursue and prosecute the perpetrators, but at the same time stressed the importance of defining terrorism, in order to distinguish it from acts of legitimate self-defence, and noted that the United Nations recognized the legitimacy of the struggle of the peoples for self-determination.

68. Kuwait believed that the most serious form of terrorism was State terrorism, which was currently very widespread, and was perpetrated by the regular armies

of some countries, as in the case of Israel against the Palestinian people.

69. Kuwait also denounced the Government of Iraq, which had failed to comply with the resolutions of the international community and was still holding in prison some civilians who had been kept under house arrest during the occupation of Kuwait. Iraq should resume its cooperation with the United Nations so that the conditions of imprisonment of those prisoners and hostages could be made known.

70. Kuwait had acceded to most of the principal international conventions to combat terrorism, for example, recently, the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism, which it had signed in Cairo on 24 April 1999. It reiterated its support for all the efforts that were being made to put an end to international terrorism.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.